Ontario

ORDER NO. 89-125
SEPTEMBER 1989
AGDEX 420/32

Factsheet

COMMON BREEDS OF BEEF CATTLE IN ONTARIO

(Part 2 of 2)

John Field, Beef Cattle Specialist

ANGUS

The Aberdeen Angus breed existed in Scotland 400 years ago and evolved during the 19th century in northeast Scotland in the counties of Angus and Aberdeen. The first Aberdeen Angus was imported to Canada in 1860.

Today's modern Angus are taller and longer than their ancestors. Angus cattle are solid black or red and are polled. Both colors are registered in the Canadian Aberdeen Angus Association herd book. Angus are noted for good maternal qualities and a high carcass quality. Angus cattle are also recognized for their ability to forage under rugged conditions.

Mature Weight Bulls 2100-2300 lb, Cows 1250 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 84 lb (79 Red), Heifers 78 lb (74 Red). **Milk Yield**: 4,000 lb/yr.

Associations Canadian Angus Association, Box 3209, Regina, Saskatchewan, S4P 3H1; Canadian Red Angus Promotion Society, P.O. Box 413, Sundre, Alberta, T0M 1X0; Ontario Aberdeen Angus Association, c/o Shirley Gamble, R.R.# 5, Box 467, Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 3N3

BELGIAN BLUE

Belgian Blues are the third largest and perhaps fastest growing beef breed in Great Britain. Although first introduced to Canada in 1976, it is only recently that cattlemen have been fully appreciating the breed's attributes of the double muscled carcass they produce and their quiet temperament. Producers are unable to bring cattle directly from Belgium due to health restrictions.

Dairy producers are making use of Belgium Blue semen to raise beef-type calves from the bottom end of their dairy herds.

Mature Weight Bulls 2700 lb, Cows 1650 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** 90 lb. ave. (approx.). **Milk Yield** 2000-4999 lb/yr.

Association Canadian Belgian Beef Cattle Association, R.R.# 2, Orangeville, Ontario L9W 2Y9.

BLONDE D'AQUITAINE

Blonde d'Aquitaine's originated in the southwest of France, where they developed as a dual purpose breed. Animals are cream to fawn colored. The breed is horned and recognized primarily for its beef characteristics and carcass quality. The first Blondes were introduced to Canada in 1971.

Mature Weight Bulls 2000-2600 lb. Cows 1600-1800 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 93 lb, Heifers 85 lb. **Milk Yield**, 2000 lb/yr.

Associations Canadian Blonde d'Aquitaine Association, 207, 1606 Centre St. North, Calgary,Alberta, T2E 2R9; Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association, c/o Dave McNevan, R.R.# 3, Hastings, Ontario K0L 1V0

CHAROLAIS

Charolais, one of the oldest French breeds and the earliest European import into Canada, arrived from the U.S. in 1955 and from France in 1967.

Originally, Charolais were used for meat, draft and milk, but have since become specialized as a beef breed.

Cattle of the Charolais breed are large and heavy, white to cream-colored and either horned or polled. Through sire evaluation and breed improvement, they offer the beef industry hardy cattle with rapid growth and good muscling.

Mature Weight Bulls 2500 lb, Cows 1600-2000 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 95 lb, Heifers 89 lb. **Milk Yield** 4000 lb/yr. (approx.).

Associations Canadian Charolais Association, 2320-41 Ave. N.E., Calgary, Alberta, T2E 6W8; Ontario Charolais Association, c/o Elaine Bertrand, R.R.# 1, Allenford, Ontario, N0H 1A0.

CHIANINA

The Chianina breed of cattle is of ancient origin, going back to the Roman era when they were used as draft animals. These cattle derive their name from the Chiana Valley in Italy. It is one of the largest breeds of cattle in the world with weights up to 4,000 lbs. The animals are tall, long-legged, long bodied and heavy. Mature bulls are six feet tall and are higher at the back. They have white hair and black skin, and adapt well to hot climates.

Chianina are noted for calving ease, maternal traits and rate of gain. They are also noted for lean carcass quality.

First importation to Canada occurred in 1971.

Mature Weight Bulls 3000 lb, Cows 1800-2400 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 103 lb, Heifers 98 lb. **Milk Yield** 4000 lb/yr.

Associations Canadian Chianina Association, R.R.# 3

Doole Road, Ladysmith, B.C., V0R 2E0; Ontario Chianina Association, c/o George Early, R.R.# 3, Kerwood, Ontario, N0M 2B0

GALLOWAY

Galloway is an older breed, raised in southwestern Scotland. They have not experienced the extreme breeding for type that other breeds have. They were originally imported from Britain to Canada in 1861.

The color is normally solid black, but may have a brownish tinge or various shades of dun. There is also a belted Galloway which is black with a wide white belt around the middle. All Galloways are polled and all colors are recorded in one herd book. Galloways are noted for their hardiness, maternal traits, calving ease, foraging ability and were used extensively for crossbreeding in western cattle.

Mature Weight Bulls 1900 lb, Cows 1100-1600 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 81 lb, Heifers 77 lb. **Milk Yield** 3500 lb/yr. (approx.)

Association Canadian Galloway Association, R.R.# 1 Manilla, Ontario K0M 2J0

GELBVIEH

Gelbvieh or German Yellow Cattle evolved in the early 19th century through the crossing of various breeds of northern Bavaria. This Produced a growthy dual-purpose animal that also served as a draft animal. Although Gelbvieh had been developed as a dual purpose animal in Germany, emphasis in recent years has been on meat production. Gelbvieh have been in Canada since 1972.

The Gelbvieh is solid-colored, reddish gold to russet with fine dense hair. They have good size, heavy muscling and are known throughout Germany for their desirable carcass.

Mature Weight Bulls 2300-2800 lb, Cows 1400-1800 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 94 lb, Heifers 87 lb. **Milk Yield** 8000 lb/yr.

Association Canadian Gelbvieh Association, Box 536, Marlborough, P.O. Centre, Calgary, Alberta, T2A 7L4.

HAYS CONVERTER

The Hays Converter, the first recognized breed of cattle developed by a Canadian livestock producer, was started by Senator Harry W. Hays of Calgary, Alberta. The breeding program involving specially selected individuals of the Holstein, Hereford and Brown Swiss breeds, produced a large, fast growing beef-type animal adapted to range conditions in Western Canada. A rigid selection program stressing early maturity in heifers, calving ease and growth was maintained. The purebred herd was registered as a breed in December 1975.

The color of the cattle is usually black with some white markings and occasionally they are red and white. They are large, long bodied, rugged and well fleshed.

Mature Weight Bulls 2300-2800 lb, Cows 1250-1500 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 84 lb, Heifers 83 lb.

Association Canadian Hays Converter Association, 6707 Elbow Drive, S.W., Calgary, Alberta, T2V 0E5

HEREFORD

The Hereford, one of the oldest and still most numerous of the cattle breeds, was developed in Herefordshire, England. First importations into Canada were in 1860.

The Hereford is a reddish-brown color with white on the head, brisket, chest, the underpart of the body, lower legs and tassel. The white face is a dominant characteristic. Herefords can be either horned or polled. Both types are registered in the same herdbook.

Hereford cattle are extremely hardy and show excellent foraging ability. Among beef breeds, they are not high milk producers but have good growth potential and calve relatively easily. Their popularity is shown by their continued use as a beef producing animal that crosses well with other breeds. Bulls are usually docile and easy to handle.

Mature Weight Bulls 2200-2300 lb, Cows 1300-1500 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 86 lb, Heifers 80 lb. **Milk Yield** 2000-3500 lb/yr. (approx.).

Associations Canadian Hereford Association, 5160 Skyline Way N.E. Calgary, Alberta, T2E 6V1; Ontario Hereford Association, c/o John Slaght, P.O. Box 68, Langton, Ontario N0E 1G0.

HIGHLAND

The Highland cattle originated in the Highlands and west coastal area of Scotland. They were first imported into Canada in the 1880's. The breed is horned and can be black, brindled red, yellow, white or dun in color.

The breed will survive and reproduce under extreme climatic and poor grazing conditions. It is known for its browsing ability. The double coat consisting of a downy undercoat and long outer coat that can reach 13 inches is well oiled to shed rain and snow. They are slow maturing and noted for longevity.

Mature Weight Bulls 1300-2000 lb, Cows 900-1400 lb. **Average Calf Birth Weight** 65 lb. **Milk Yield** 2000-4999 lb/yr.

Association Canadian Highland Cattle Society c/o Mrs. Joan Wort, Keijoasan Fold, R.R.# 2, Tweed, Ontario, K0K 3J0.

LIMOUSIN

The Limousin originated in the hill country of south-central France. The cattle range from a golden wheat color in the females to a deep red-gold in the males, darkening somewhat with maturity and age. The Limousin has always been selected for its meat qualities. Referred to as the "carcass breed" Limousins do well in carcass competitions with their large rib eyes and high yielding, quality, lean carcass.

Cows are also noted for their calving ease and mothering ability. Limousins were introduced into Canada From France in late 1968.

Mature Weight Bulls 2400 lb, Cows 1400-1600 lb. **Birth Weight** Bulls 86 lb, Heifers 81 lb. **Milking Ability** 5000 lb/yr. (approx.).

Associations Canadian Limousin Association, 5663 Burleigh Crescent, S.E., Calgary, Alberta, T2H 1Z7; Ontario Limousin Association c/o Gayle Nelson, R.R.# 2, Baltimore, Ontario K0K 1C0

LINCOLN RED

Lincoln Red are a type of Shorthorn which were segregated in Lincolnshire, England and surrounding areas. A solid red,

the large Lincolns had more stretch to them than their Shorthorn counterparts. Originally, the breed was developed as a dual purpose animal but now is considered a beef breed.

Lincoln Reds are well muscled, often polled and noted for fertility and easy calving. They adapt readily to the Canadian climate and combine favorably with existing breeds.

As of 1977, Lincoln Red and Shorthorn were reunited in the Canadian Shorthorn Association Herdbook.

Mature Weight Bulls 1800-2450 lb, Cows 1300-1400 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 83 lb, Heifers 76 lb. **Milk Yield** 8000 lb/yr.

Association Canadian Lincoln Red Association, c/o Mrs. Hunt, R.R. # 1, Kettleby, Ontario, L0G 1J0.

MAINE-ANJOU

The Maine-Anjou is one of the largest breeds of cattle in France. They were developed in Brittany when stock that existed in the area before 1850 were crossed with imported Shorthorns to produce a superior animal. The breed is large, horned, and is dark red, usually with a white underline and often with small white patches on the body. The appeal of this breed to cattle producers is their high growth rate, milking ability and good disposition. Lean carcass quality and high cutability also put them in demand.

The breed was first imported to Canada in 1968.

Mature Weight Bulls 2750 lb, Cows 1700-2000 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 99 lb, Heifers 93 lb. **Milk Production** 6000 + lb/yr.

Associations Canadian Maine-Anjou Association, Postal Station B, Box 3248, Calgary, Alberta, T2M 4L8; Ontario Maine-Anjou Association, c/o Kandee Lucas-Hagerman, P.O. Box 1, Napanee, Ontario, K7R 3L4.

MARCHIGIANA

The Marchigiana is the most popular breed of beef cattle in Italy, comprising about 45% of the beef cattle population in that country. Over the centuries these cattle were bred for draft and meat purposes. They are large, docile and adaptable to various climates. Marchigiana have short, grayish-white hair with darker patches on the switches, ears and around the eyes. The first importations to Canada were in 1973.

Mature Weight Bulls 2800-3000 lb, Cows 1450-1800 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 95 lb, Heifers 87 lb. **Milk Yield** 2000-4999 lb/yr.

Association Romagnola-Marchigiana "Romark", Box 177, Jarvie, Alberta, T0G 1H0.

MURRAY GREY

The Murray Grey cattle originated in Australia and were introduced to Canada in 1969. The breed resulted from the chance mating in 1905 of a light roan, nearly white Shorthorn cow to a purebred black Angus bull producing a calf that was a silver grey in color. The same cow produced 12 calves, all grey by various Angus bulls. From eight females of these naturally polled grey calves the color remained dominant in their progeny although Angus bulls were used exclusively.

The breed has a reputation for calving ease, motherly ability, hardiness and a docile temperament. They are easy keepers, can finish on grass and have a high carcass cutability.

Mature Weight Bulls 1600-2000 lb, Cows 1000-1300 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 77 lb, Heifers 73 lb. **Milk Yield** 4000 lb/yr (approx.).

Association Canadian Murray Grey Association, c/o Doris Burrington, Box 605, Red Deer, Alberta, T4N 5G6.

PIEDMONTESE

The Piedmontese is considered a double-muscled breed which is native to only a small section of northwest Italy in the Alps. Importations to Canada were delayed because the national breed association in Italy refused to sell breeding stock until 1980.

Piedmontese are fawn in color, gradually turning white with black skin pigmentation. The breed is considered to be fully double muscled with none of the difficulties traditionally associated with this characteristic and are noted for their quality lean carcass, high cutability, calving ease and maternal traits.

Mature Weight Bulls 2000-2200 lb, Cows 1400 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 78 lb, Heifers 72 lb. **Milk Yield** 5000-6000 lb/yr (approx).

Association Canadian Piedmontese Association, Box 11, Admiral, Saskatchewan, S0N 0B0.

PINZGAUER

The Pinzgauer belongs to a group of European cattle breeds that are indigenous to the Alpine regions of Austria. They are considered a dual purpose breed. The first Pinzgauers arrived in Canada in the early 1970's.

The hair color of the Pinzgauer cattle is chestnut brown having a range of light to dark brown with a clearly defined white stripe of varying width along the back and loins. The breed is of medium size, horned, with a gentle temperament.

Mature Weight Bulls 2000-2400 lb, Cows 1300-1600 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 95 lb, Heifers 85 lb. **Milk Yield** 7000 lb/yr (approx.).

Association Canadian Pinzgauer Association, 231 2116-27th Avenue N.E., Calgary, Alberta, T2E 7A6.

RED POLL

Red Polls existed as a prehistoric breed in Europe. The Danes introduced them to England. Two strains, the Norfolk and Suffolk, were crossed in 1808 to combine fleshing qualities and milking qualities, respectively. This was the origin of the Red Poll breed which was introduced to Canada in the early 1880's.

The breed is red in color, small to medium in size and polled.

Mature Weight Bulls 1800-2000 lb, Cows 1100-1200 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 83 lb, Heifers 76 lb. **Milk Yield** 7000+ lb/yr.

Association Canadian Red Poll Cattle Association, c/o Mrs. Jackie Fleming, R.R. # 3, Ponoka, Alberta, T0C 2H0.

SALERS

This breed was developed in south-central France in the rough mountain region of Salers. The cattle are a solid, rather deep cherry red, varying somewhat in intensity and horned. A small number are black and polled animals are rare. Salers

were first brought to Canada in 1972.

Salers were originally bred for milk, meat and draft purposes. The breed now is primarily raised for meat production. They are known for their maternal qualities of easy calving and milk production, good disposition and their ability to forage and tolerate extremes in climate.

Mature Weight Bulls 2000-2500 lb, Cows 1300-1500 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 88 lb, Heifers 81 lb. **Milk Yield** 6,000 lb/yr.

Associations Salers Association of Canada, #330 2116-27th Ave. N.E. Calgary, Alberta, T2E 7A6; Ontario Salers Association, c/o Dave Pease, R.R. # 6, Shelburne, Ontario, L0N 1S0.

SHORTHORN

The Shorthorn originated in the counties of Durham, Northumberland and York, England. First importations to Canada took place in 1825. The Shorthorn has been called the *Foundation Breed* since it has been used in the development of thirty or more exotic breeds throughout the world.

Shorthorns may be red, white, roan or any combination of red and white color. Cattle are either horned or polled. The breed acquired a reputation for hardiness, mothering ability, and good temperament. The major development of the breed has been for beef production, although dual purpose herds for milk production are being maintained.

Mature Weight Bulls 2300 lb, Cows 1200-1400 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 83 lb, Heifers 76 lb. **Milk Yield** 6000 lb/yr (approx.).

Associations Canadian Shorthorn Association, Gummer Building, 5 Douglas Street, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 2S8; Ontario Shorthorn Association, c/o Mrs. Neil Brown, R.R. # 2, Uxbridge, Ontario, L0C 1K0.

SIMMENTAL

The Simmental originated in Switzerland during the middle ages. Although developed as a triple purpose meat/draft/milk animal, they are now considered a dual purpose milk and meat producer. Simmentals range in color from a light tan to dark red with white markings on the head, behind the shoulders, belly, legs and flank.

Simmentals are noted for their large size, muscling, high growth rate and high milk production. Simmental cows usually wean heavy calves due to their high milk production and the breed's high growth potential.

Mature Weight Bulls 2400-2800 lb, Cows 1600 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 94 lb, Heifers 88 lb. **Milk Yield** 9000 lb/yr.

Associations Canadian Simmental Association, #13 4101-19th St., N.E. Calgary, Alberta, T2E 7C4; Ontario Simmental Association, c/o Denise McLachlan, R.R. # 3, P.O. Box 67, Ailsa Craig, Ontario, N0M 1A0.

SOUTH DEVON

The South Devon breed was developed in the southern part of Devonshire, England. Originally a draft type these cattle were selected for both milk production and fleshing quality during the nineteenth century.

South Devons are the largest of the English and Scottish breeds; these cattle are a solid bright yellowish red, varying some in shade and often having a somewhat mottled appearance. The cattle are horned and noted for hardiness, good milk yield and their lean carcass quality.

South Devon cattle were introduced to Canada in 1969 direct from England.

Mature Weight Bulls 2200-2800 lb, Cows 1400 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** ave. 80 lb. **Milk Yield** 6500+ lbs/yr.

Association Canadian South Devon Association, Box 667, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

TARENTAISE

The Tarentaise is one of the old breeds indigenous to the Alpine regions of southeastern France. It is a hardy, well adapted mountain type that has survived to the present without any particular infusion of other breeds.

Tarentaise are a small to medium sized animal, early maturing and usually reddish tan in color. The breed is horned and had been primarily selected for milk production, although they are considered a dual purpose breed at present.

First imports to North America were in 1972.

Mature Weight Bulls 1800 lb, Cows 1200-1300 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 82 lb, Heifers 78 lb. **Milk Yield** 5800+ lb/yr.

Association Canadian Tarentaise Association, Box 333, Aberdeen, Sask. S0K 0A0.

WELSH BLACK

The Welsh Black are descendants of cattle raised and domesticated in the rugged Welsh mountains of ancient Britain before the Roman Conquest in 55 B.C.

Welsh Black cattle are medium in size, horned, black in color and have thick soft and fairly long hair which is shaggy in winter. They are known as a maternal breed with gentleness, hardiness, milking ability and foraging ability.

The first Welsh Black were purchased in the U.S. in 1968 and the first direct importation from Wales was in 1971.

Mature Weight Bulls 2000-2600 lb, Cows 1200-1400 lb. **Calf Birth Weight** Bulls 85 lb, Heifers 76 lb. **Milk Yield** 7000 lb/yr.

Association Canadian Welsh Black Cattle Society, P.O. Box 477, Hanna, Alberta, T0J 1P0.

References

Milk yield estimates – Alberta Beef Herd Management Reference Binder and Study Guide 1987

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ISSN 0225-7882